

How to Enhance Leadership in Distance Education

A recent study identifies distance education leaders' ideas for improving online courses

by Judy Dahl

“In business, they provide more extensive training for online instructors because their bottom line is money,” says Barbara McKenzie, chair of the department of media and instructional technology at the State University of West Georgia. This observation led her to conduct a study titled “Making Distance Education Work,” for which she surveyed distance education experts from business and industry as well as from universities.

“[Businesses] take a lot of time to critique and evaluate everything that goes into a course; I haven’t observed that as much in higher education,” notes McKenzie, a former consultant to businesses. “Universities provide a lot of feedback on how to be an effective online instructor, but less support in how to design materials to go online,” she adds. “Therefore the materials are sometimes not designed that well.”

The survey

McKenzie’s study focused on how universities can do a better job putting courses online. “We asked distance education leaders open-ended questions and reported their observations of

things they’d like to see change,” she explains.

The survey, conducted via e-mail and phone, included 11 distance education leaders, trainers, faculty and support personnel, four from businesses and seven from universities. Survey questions asked participants what they’d like to see more frequently in course design, in interactive activities and in evaluation activities. The survey also asked what suggestions participants would offer new or experienced online instructors.

The findings: Design

Participants offered several recommendations for effective course design.

- **Use a variety of information formats:** Use PowerPoint presentations, Word documents, e-readings, video and other formats. “Don’t use one format predominately or students will get bored,” says McKenzie. “We need to reach people with different learning preferences.”
- **Pilot test a course before it’s offered:** Have someone, preferably a person similar to your students,

go through the course and give you feedback — what works well, what doesn’t, if online links don’t work, if there are typos. “If small things are wrong, students will pick up on it,” notes McKenzie.

- **Make wording in courses consistent:** Keep the directions consistent from one lesson to the next; standardize word choice. “Otherwise students get confused and frustrated,” says McKenzie. “This didn’t jump out at me until I taught several courses and got feedback.”
- **Keep technology simple:** Focus on content, not technology. Make it easy for students to navigate courses and access materials. “If you make it too complicated, students get frustrated,” McKenzie says. “For example, it’s difficult if they have to upload or download a lot of documents.”

The findings: Interaction activities

“We’ve found that interaction is the key to effective online classes,” says McKenzie. “It keeps students feeling connected, and prevents that feeling of isolation.”

- **More instructor-to-student interaction:** Build in activities and assignments that require students to interact with you. “I always ask students how a course is going, if they’re experiencing difficulties, and if so, what those are. I fix things immediately; they like

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DISTANCE education

Report

Distance Education Report (ISSN 1094-320X) is published semimonthly by Magna Publications Inc., 2718 Dryden Drive, Madison, WI 53704.

Phone: 800-433-0499. Copyright © 2004. One-year (24 issues) subscription: \$399. Periodicals postage paid at Madison, WI POSTMASTER: Send change of address to: *Distance Education Report*, 2718 Dryden Drive, Madison, WI 53704. E-mail: custserv@magnapubs.com; Web Site: www.magnapubs.com; fax: 608-246-3597

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New Study Shows National DE Mainstreaming

The 2004 Sloan Survey of Online Learning, *Entering the Mainstream: The Quality and Extent of Online Education in the U. S.*, released in November, says that online enrollments continue to grow at rates faster than enrolments in traditional programs.

The survey, jointly administered by Babson College and Sloan-C, concludes that the expected average growth rate for online students for 2004 is 24.8 percent, up from 19.8 percent in 2003. "There are 2.6 million students learning online this semester and there is no evidence enrollment has reached a plateau," says Jeff Seaman, chief information officer of the Sloan Consortium.

The survey is based on responses from over 1,100 colleges and universities. The majority of schools responding to the survey (53.6 percent) agree that online education is critical to their long-term strategy.

Frank Mayadas, president of Sloan-C, says "This year's results show that schools offering online courses believe their online students are at least as satisfied as those actually in the classroom."

The complete report is available now as a free download in PDF format and will soon be available for order in a printed version. To access a copy of the report, go to: www.sloan-c.org/resources/entering_mainstream.pdf. For more information on Sloan-C go to: www.sloan-c.org/resources/survey.asp.

Penn State and Internet2 Release Open Source Code for File-Sharing Technology

Plans for secure, high-powered, peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing technology for academia came a step closer to fruition when Penn State and Internet2(R) announced the release of open source code for their collaborative software project, LionShare.

Funded by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, LionShare is a collaboration between Penn State and several partner organizations including Internet2; Simon Fraser University of Canada; and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Open Knowledge Initiative (OKI).

The LionShare source code release will provide all interested programmers and developers with the opportunity to contribute feedback and suggestions. At the same time, Lionshare partners will continue to fine-tune the project software, which is slated for official beta release for universities and institutions around the country this upcoming January.

This continual dialogue with developers and potential network users has significantly furthered the development of the technology. To learn more about LionShare and to access the new open source code — or to join the developers community — go to: <http://lionshare.its.psu.edu/main/>.

E-Rate Funding on Hold

A suspension of payments from the federal E-rate program has prevented public schools and libraries around the country with serious problems in paying ongoing costs of information technology. The E-rate program provides \$2.25 billion annually to the nation's schools and libraries for technology services. Critics have said that abuse and fraud are rampant in the E-rate program. Payments were halted two months ago, without warning, as a result of changes made by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) designed to limit these problems.

No one had given any indication how long the moratorium will last. In the meantime, many state agencies are trying to figure out how they will pay their bills. Robert Boucher, of the Wisconsin state educational funding agency, said his state has not received \$22 million

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Networks for the People: Closing the Digital Divide in El Paso

By Catherine Stover

Imagine a city where more than 100,000 students are linked through a high-speed internet network, where everyone from kindergarten through graduate school has access to Internet 2, where fiber optic systems run seamlessly through three huge institutions: the public school system, the community college, and the university campus. Welcome to El Paso, Texas.

Yes, El Paso: the fifth poorest metropolitan area in the country. According to the 2000 Census data, El Paso has twice the national percentage rate of people living below the poverty level. This city, which is on the Mexican border, has the additional challenge of providing assistance in achieving proficiency in English on a large scale. And all schools at all levels are working with substantial budget cuts.

"The greater the challenge, the greater the opportunity to make a difference," says Dr. Richard Rhodes, President of El Paso Community College, who led the educational community's effort to close the digital divide. He, along with President Diana Natalicio of the University of Texas at El Paso and Superintendent Charles Tafoya of the El Paso Independent School District, formed a consortium to create the Orion Ring Project.

In the broadest sense, the goal of the Orion Ring Project is to be the great equalizer in El Paso.

How the Orion Project began

The project was officially launched a year ago, but the story begins long before 2003. "Projects like this do not start with a telecommunications link agreement," says Dr. Stephen Riter, Vice President of Information Resources and Planning at the University of Texas El Paso. "They grow out of a history of cooperation. About a decade ago, we woke up and realized that we have a stake in the

educational system here. We have a stake in how well the schools prepare their students for college. We also have a stake in the community college."

A history of cooperation and communication were well established on the day that Dr. Rhodes met with Barbara Walker, the Cisco Systems, Inc. vendor in El Paso. They were discussing the fiber optic network that the community college had invested in activating, which was able to provide more power than the community college required. Walker, whose clients also include the school district, said, "Why don't you link up with the public school? They're your biggest customer. And there's no point in having a highway unless you have cars to run on it."

El Paso Independent School District had been awarded e-rate discounts to build fiber optic rings to connect their campuses (and 64,000 students) in 2000. If joined together, the two institutions could better carry out their goal of delivering dual-credit enrollment classes. These classes, which could be taken via the web at home, would increase the number of students who could graduate with a high school diploma and a year of community college credits. It was clearly a good idea.

Adding the university to the Orion Ring was also clearly a good idea: the university was on the brink of gaining access to Internet 2, and would benefit from sharing the cost as well as the power. In addition, the university and the community college wanted to share records electronically and develop a common application form for financial aides. The university also wanted to make more classes more available to the teachers who wanted to work on master degrees. In addition, there were discussions about setting up a mentoring program for first-year teachers, to stem a high attrition rate.

Barbara Walker, who also was the vendor for the University, helped bring

the three institutions together. A native of El Paso, she also used her connections with state, county and local governments who regulate the fiber.

"Everyone was able to put aside their egos and work for what's the best for all of us," she says. "When there is philosophical alignment, strong leadership, and significant cost sharing, no technology barriers are insurmountable."

One piece of the puzzle, however, had a hard time fitting in. The local cable provider, like all cable providers, is required to provide access for community service. They had a long-term no-cost lease with the community college. When, however, the college began adding partners to the network, the provider became very uncomfortable, fearing that they were going to end up losing business as a result. However, when their business and home sales did not decline, they were able to see that it was very likely that they, too, would benefit when the community began using the network on an increased scale.

A project of this size requires work from dozens of people. It became clear early on that one person needed to coordinate everything. That's where Dr. Ron Langley — self-described as the "the nag" — comes in. He is the one who gets everyone to do what they're supposed to do when they're supposed to do it.

His role extends beyond that, however. He is a founder of Educational Consulting Foundation, which is a group of over a hundred consultants who work with colleges and universities to manage their higher education technology. He had conducted an audit of the University's technology first, and then was hired to assess the college's technology systems. After he completed an analysis of the school district's

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knowing I care,” says McKenzie.

- **More two-way desktop interaction:** Include chat rooms and other opportunities for online discussion that create a classroom community.
- **More student-to-group interaction:** Create virtual study groups and other ways for small groups of students to connect.
- **More collaborative student interactions through class projects:** Have groups of students work together on some assignments and class projects.

The findings: Evaluation activities

Survey participants believe two-way assessments by students and instructors improve course effectiveness and student morale.

- **More formative assessments within the course:** During a course, have students provide direct feedback on how the course is going, along with recommendations for changes. “They’re usually quite candid; it helps you make timely improvements,” notes McKenzie.
- **More portfolio evaluations:** Have

students create a portfolio during the course and send it to you for evaluation. This often takes the form of a PowerPoint presentation with links to all course projects and assignments.

- **More instructor interactions with students on their work:** Provide students with frequent feedback on their work and give them an opportunity to improve their grades. “I comment on assignments and send them back to students; they revise and return them,” says McKenzie. “We go back and forth as they improve their work, and therefore their grade — that’s what learning is all about.”

Recommendations for new instructors

In addition to their observations on effective course structure, survey participants provided recommendations for new online instructors.

- **Take a course as a student:** Taking an online course before you teach one will give you an understanding of this delivery mechanism, and first-hand experience of what makes a course effective.
- **Start simple:** Use basic tools,

technology and formats at first while you gain experience. “As your knowledge and confidence levels increase, you can add more tools,” advises McKenzie.

- **Realize that teaching online takes time:** Understand that developing and teaching an online course may take more time than with a traditional course. “It takes about 2.5 times longer than a face-to-face class,” McKenzie points out, “but it’s well worth it to reach people at a distance.”
- **Provide timely responses to students:** Tell students up front, in your syllabus, how frequently you’ll provide feedback. For example, include a statement that you’ll always answer students’ questions within 24 or 48 hours. “An effective instructor will always respond within 48 hours or less,” says McKenzie.
- **Find and work with a mentor:** Find an experienced instructor who can answer your questions, or review your materials and provide feedback.
- **Get trained:** Make sure you

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systems, he was the one person who knew everyone’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges. Because he had worked with 50 other colleges and universities in the last three years, he was able to provide help from “benchmarks to bylaws.” With assistance from his team of experts, Dr. Langley was able to lead the consortium’s strategic planning and implementation process.

By all accounts, the first year of the Orion Project has been a success. They have been able to increase dual enrollment students to 1200 from 68. The Internet 2 service has been installed for

everyone. The contracts with the cable provider have been signed. The strategic planning process has been completed and is already achieving goals. The network is also ready to expand to include other area school districts. All this is being done during a time when everyone’s budget is cut, when “doing more with less” is not just a mantra, it’s a mandate.

Lessons for the road

“You’d be surprised at how many communities could do this,” Dr. Langley says. “The idea is absolutely transferable,” Walker adds. As the two outside participants, how would they recommend other institutions proceed

with a similar program?

- **Start with a strong leader who is able to bring other people together.** In El Paso, that person was Dr. Rhodes because he was able to bring everyone to the table in a way that made them believe that they would leave with big benefits.
- **Identify three to four key players at first, no more than that.** More is not better at the beginning.
- **Make sure that each player can identify one deliverable that will take no more than 12–18 months to achieve.** It must be something you can define and measure.

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Getting the Best out of Adjunct Faculty

Mary Lou Santovec

Many institutions recruit their distance education faculty from the ranks of their full-time faculty. When that fails to fill the need, online administrators will turn to adjuncts, some of whom may already teach on their campus. A third alternative is to hire those who do not reside locally and who may never have set foot on your campus.

Using large numbers of adjuncts presents different training and management issues than hiring from the ranks of full-time faculty. To develop a comprehensive and organized online adjunct program requires institutional attention to recruitment, development and evaluation.

Maria Puzziferro-Schnitzer, instructional program manager, Virtual College located in the Urban Resource Center at Florida Community College at Jacksonville, and her colleague, Lynne Crosby, director of program development for the liberal arts, have been developing a systematic set of best practices to guide administrators in the hiring and development of adjunct faculty for distance programs.

Step by step

Recruiting, hiring and developing adjuncts involves a sequence of steps much like climbing the rungs on a ladder, say the duo. Each step of the process — recruitment, screening, hiring, training, course preparation, support and mentoring and evaluation — must include a commitment to educational quality and adjunct retention.

Adjunct faculty must meet the same educational, professional and scholarly requirements as their full-time peers. Without this emphasis on quality, the institution's accreditation is put at risk.

Many adjuncts are attracted to the field because of its flexibility and autonomy. For them, the retention key is helping them to develop a feeling of engagement with the campus. The quality of faculty support is also important.

The duo offered several manage-

ment models that institutions can use to recruit and retain adjuncts. With a departmental-level support model all adjunct recruitment efforts and support fall under either the academic department or the distance learning department. A central office model screens all candidates through a central office like a Human Resources department and then funnels them toward the appropriate academic departments.

"A shared model of adjunct support seems to work best, where academic departments take the initiative in screening, hiring and training adjunct faculty, with overall support from the central Human Resources office," noted the pair.

The screening process should be mutual. "Quality instructors will want to teach for institutions that demonstrate a commitment to quality, and to its employees' professional and personal development and overall satisfaction," Schnitzer and Crosby have said.

Defining adjuncts

In addition to the different types of hiring and support structures, Schnitzer and Crosby have defined eight types of adjunct candidates an institution might encounter:

- the Philosopher
This candidate is likely to have a degree in a liberal arts area that offers few full-time faculty openings. Teaching online may be a way of finally utilizing his or her advanced education. Teaching and online technologies experience may vary.
- the Traditional Teacher
This candidate may have a high level of instructional experience in classroom, but online technologies experience may be limited.
- the Moonlighter
Employed full-time at another institution, this candidate seeks adjunct work as a salary supplement. Experience may vary, but

time commitment should be a primary discussion topic in the interview process.

- the Full-time Part-timer
This online adjunct is employed at several institutions and thus teaching and online technologies experience will be high.
- the Administrator
These easily accessible candidates are easily trained and familiar with the organizational environment and student body. They also may have high accountability to the institution. Their teaching and online technologies experience varies.
- the Graduate
This individual is a recent graduate of an advanced degree program and is seeking his or her first teaching experience. The teaching experience can be limited, but online technologies experience may be high.
- the Seeker
This candidate views teaching online as a stepping stone to a full-time teaching position either with the hiring institution or another one. Teaching and online experiences may vary.
- the Retiree
This candidate seeks part-time work. Teaching and online technologies experience may vary. A simple desire to teach is typically this candidate's chief motivation for applying.

The motivation for applying differs for each type of candidate. So, too does their expectation of what and how they will be teaching. "The role of the manager/interviewer is to be prepared to answer questions, and create a set of expectations and standards about what distance learning means to the specific institution," say Schnitzer and Crosby.

Screening non-local potential candi-

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dates can be a problem. Scenario-based questions encourage creativity and help the interviewer assess the candidate's ability to deal with problems. Interviewers will also want to assess the candidate's perceptions and experience with non-traditional age learners, who make up many online student bodies.

Other tools to screen non-resident candidates include e-mail exchange exercises, conferencing software or utilizing the actual learning management system to communicate with the candidate. Asking candidates to participate in a one- to two-week screening course may be useful in assessing technology competencies before and after training.

Once candidates are screened and the decision to hire is made, a contract should be drawn up. "Since distance

education is a relatively new teaching and learning paradigm, a contract can help clarify instructional and technical expectations and standards for performance," says the pair. These expectations can include student response time and instructor feedback.

Orientation

Orientation programs have two objectives: to acquaint and assimilate. Those who are physically removed from campus are particularly vulnerable to feeling disconnected and disengaged. Orientation programs are one way of creating an informative and welcoming experience for all new adjuncts.

Quality orientation programs should include information for administrative and technical support points of contact, an explanation of administrative procedures, instructional procedures and

requirements, technical requirements, technical resources for teaching online, curriculum processes, copyright guidelines, and standards of expectations. Pedagogical training should complement basic technology training.

Strategies for solving teaching concerns and teaching online should be included in any orientation program. Problem-solving exercises and frequently asked questions are also useful tools.

To give adjuncts a sense of engagement with the campus, a virtual walking tour along with virtual "meet and greet" with key support staff is helpful. Another way to engage faculty is to build a teaching community.

Creating collaborative opportunities for interaction and professional exchange between adjuncts is one way

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promised under the program, money that is used to fund Internet and phone service for 426 school districts and 387 public libraries.

West Virginia Plans Largest Public Computing Grid

Officials in West Virginia plan to unveil the Global Grid Exchange, a statewide open infrastructure that organizers say will be the largest public computing grid in the world. The grid, which is being developed under the West Virginia High Technology Consortium Foundation and funded by the Economic Development Authority, will use unused computing resources around the state. Participants hope that bringing together unused computing resources via the Internet will create a grid that provides a common and inexpensive infrastructure for government, academia and industry.

The Grid will initially be solely available for government, industry, and

academic interests within West Virginia. Later, the grid will be opened to users around the world.

RESOURCES

Theory & Practice of Online Education

Terry Anderson and Fathi Elloumi (Athabasca, 2004)

Free download

Athabasca University's most recent contribution to online and distance education around the world is edited by Terry Anderson and Fathi Elloumi. *Theory and Practice* compiles the online and distance education expertise developed at Canada's Open University during the past 30 years. In 454 free-to-download pages, it addresses the practical issues all online educators face, from infrastructure and course development to student support and copyright issues.

Theory & Practice of Online Education may be ordered at www.globaled.com/index.html

Studying at a Distance

Christine Talbot
(Open University Press, 2003)

Christine Talbot covers the most important issues associated with studying at a distance in her latest publication. She starts with preparation for studying, showing readers how to assess their existing skills and identify their needs, including becoming aware of the different modes of learning using a range of technologies. Particularly relevant are the sections on using virtual learning environments, equipment needs, how to organize one's time effectively, and how to make the best use of the support and resources available. There's also coverage of the core skills required for any form of course in further or higher education - note-taking, essay writing, and revision and examination skills. The guide is a readable publication offering clear explanations of how to best prepare for independent study. ●

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of facilitating the development of teaching communities. These communities are particularly useful at the community college level where adjuncts teach between 25 to 33 percent of the credit hours there. They can prevent a feeling of isolation among adjuncts as well as the feeling that somehow they're "second-class citizens" since they're not teaching full-time.

Teaching communities should foster quality instruction and learning out-

comes. Ideally, the community should include both adjunct and full-time faculty. Mentoring programs that create a network of peer-based support for distance learning faculty are also helpful.

These programs are easy to set up. Online faculty lounges can be created as a simple Web site with resources and interactive tools. Online teaching communities can be created as asynchronous forums within the learning management system or as listservs.

To prevent unneeded surprises, the evaluation process should be discussed

with candidates during the interview and orientation. Evaluation should have a purpose and a structure. It must incorporate a feedback loop, with formative and summative processes. And whatever types of evaluations an institution chooses to use, they should be the same as those utilized for full-time faculty.

Proper recruitment and retention of adjuncts can ensure a quality online program, satisfied students and faculty, and the opportunity to expand to meet students' needs without breaking the budget. ●

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- It helps when the technology heads are leaders, not just techies. In El Paso, all three heads had non-technology backgrounds. (One had been a principal; the others had accounting and finance backgrounds.) It's really important that they understand that outcomes, not technologies, are the drivers.
- Outside people can play a very important role. They can be unbiased, making sure that there is a

sense of "fairness" throughout the process. They need to be visionary and also able to manage a lot of details. Outside people ideally should have both experience and a large network to draw upon.

- There has to be a tradition and a spirit of cooperation. The more the players try to protect their turfs, the less likely it is that progress will be made.
- It helps to divide the project into three sections: administrative, technical, and content.

It's one sign of a project that is likely to continue to be successful when many people are eager to attribute success to many others. It would take a long list to mention all the people who were given credit for being instrumental with Orion. All, however agree, that the catalyst was Dr. Rhodes, who believes, "Commitment of leadership is more than visions and dreams. It's using technology to equalize and educate the communities we serve." ●

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receive adequate training on distance education technology, course design and online instruction before you enter the arena.

Recommendations for experienced instructors

Participants reminded experienced instructors to keep their knowledge — and their courses — current.

- **Keep your courses updated with regard to content and technology:** Review your courses often; update both the core content and real-life examples as the world changes. For example, if you include the U.S president's name, make sure you're referencing the

current president. Upgrade technology to keep courses from looking stale, and make sure all online links still work.

- **Provide timely responses to students:** As your course load increases, continue meeting course standards for responding to students.
- **Take an online course:** Take a course as a student periodically to look for ways to improve your own courses, and to better relate to your students. "It's important to put yourself in students' shoes," says McKenzie.

What's next?

As McKenzie disseminates her study's findings — and uses them to enhance her

own university's distance education courses — she's poised to launch another survey within the next month. This one will target distance education administrators, and will ask open-ended questions to identify how they're developing online programs and instructors, and what methods are working well.

"We're focusing on administrators because they're the leaders; they control the money, the faculty selection process, the training," McKenzie says. She hopes to present this study's results at the State University of West Georgia's annual international distance education conference in June 2005. ●

Obstacles to Learning Objects

Although learning object repositories like MERLOT, CAREO, and WiscOnline are amassing, cataloging, and offering for use a wide assortment of learning objects, relatively few instructors or course developers are taking advantage of these resources.

For some, the amount of time it takes to modify a learning object to suit a course's specific learning objectives is prohibitive. "It's a time investment, and since it still is not recognized by tenure and promotion committees at many universities, faculty don't see the payoff of the time spent on redeveloping or modifying learning objects. And it's not something you can do in a few hours," says Mieke Caris, director of the Faculty Center for Professional Excellence at Adelphi University.

Where to find them?

In addition, many learning object repositories are updated rather infrequently, which can frustrate faculty members when they think they've found a useful object only to find that its link no longer works. Too many experiences like that can discourage even the most optimistic faculty members.

Finding appropriate learning objects can be a challenge as well. Not all repositories are organized in the same manner, but they are improving with the help of librarians, who are devising better ways of organizing learning objects with metadata that they're already using in their library systems.

MERLOT's database, for example, allows users to browse subject or search by keyword. It also has an elaborate peer-review system that lets users know what subject experts and users think of each learning object.

How learning objects make the grade

Each object submitted to a subject area for which MERLOT has an editorial board is subjected to triage to determine its priority for being reviewed. Reviews consist of three

elements: quality of content, potential effectiveness as a teaching tool, and ease of use.

These peer-reviews can help assure faculty that these learning objects are worth considering. Adapting them to one's course is another matter.

Adelphi University offers faculty workshops on modifying learning objects and provides one-on-one help for those interested in re-using learning objects. They start by identifying the pedagogical problem they want to address and searching learning object repositories for something that might be useful. "Sometimes they find great material, and sometimes they're very disappointed," Caris says.

As more faculty members and course developers create learning objects and submit them to learning object repositories, the repositories will become more useful, which also makes it critical to have a really good means of organizing and reviewing these learning objects.

When an instructor or course developer finds a potentially useful learning object, Caris has them consider the following questions:

- What is the essence of this learning object?
- How would it fit the course?
- What aspect of it can be built upon?

Using learning objects

In some cases, the learning object can work with little modification. In other cases, just a small portion of it will be useful. Either way, it is important to not let the existing learning object dictate the direction of the course. "I've seen faculty members use learning objects as is and kind of wrap it into their course material, which is not always successful. Not too many are breaking open the materials and saying, 'I'll take this little piece or those pictures and build something new,'" Caris says.

Unfortunately, few take advantage of learning object repositories because of a lack of time or incentives, and often they will turn to learning objects provided by textbook publishers, which are often outdated and are usually not peer-reviewed, Caris says.

Caris says that using learning objects does not pose a control issue for faculty. For the most part faculty do not view using learning objects as giving up control of their courses any more than they would consider using a textbook that way. "I encourage faculty to develop the course outline themselves, find appropriate materials, and merge them seamlessly into the course."

Ownership, however, is an issue for some faculty members. Ambiguity about copyright laws and intellectual property has hindered the growth of learning object repositories. For example, if a faculty member develops a learning object with the help of technical support staff, who owns that learning object? Can the faculty member share it with others? In order to realize the potential of learning object repositories, institutions will need to address these and other questions.

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- Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching (MERLOT): www.merlot.org/Home.po
- Campus of Alberta Repository of Educational Objects (CAREO): www.careo.org/
- Wisconsin Online Resource Center (WiscOnline): www.wisconline.org/index.htm